

Week 8: Cognitive Dissonance Theory + Rhetoric

***COMM 2100 Introduction to Comm Theory
SI Session***

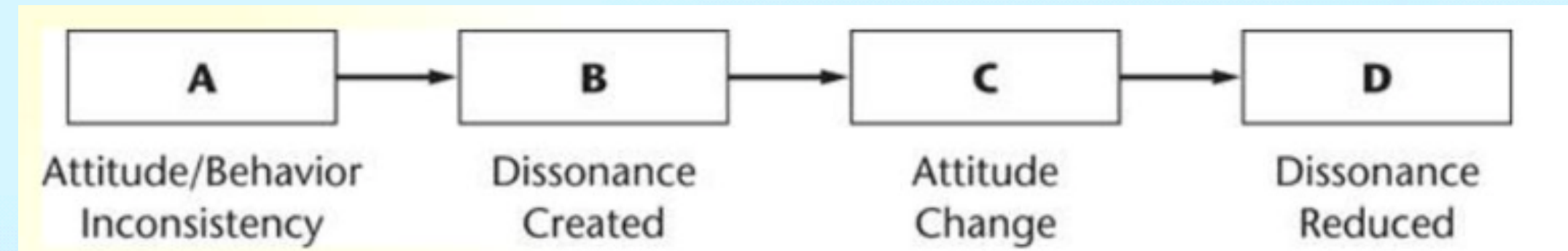
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Cognitive Dissonance

- A distressing mental state caused by inconsistency between a person's two beliefs, or a belief and an action.



Reducing Dissonance between Actions & Beliefs



- Selective exposure: the tendency people have to avoid information that would create cognitive dissonance because it's incompatible with their current beliefs.
- Postdecision dissonance: Strong doubts experienced after making an important, close-call decision that is difficult to reverse.
- Minimal Justification: the best way to stimulate an attitude change in others is to offer just enough incentive to elicit counter-attitudinal behavior.

I only talk with friends who never say "quit smoking".

We avoid any information that could be against our belief.

I keep hanging out with fellows smoking cigars, after people told me it's not good.

We convince ourselves that we've made the right choice after facing a close-call decision.

Behavior

Attitude

We change our attitude to justify our behaviors, to eliminate dissonance.

Revisions

- Self-consistency: Humans are rationalizing animals, and the self-inconsistency, rather than the tension/discomfort that makes people want to reduce dissonance.
- Personal responsibility for bad outcomes: the dissonance is caused by “behaving in such a way as to feel personally responsible for bringing about an aversive event”.
- Self-affirmation to dissipate dissonance: the dissonance happens when we feel that the behaviors hurt our self-esteem.

The results of Festinger's famous \$1/\$20 experiment can be explained in a number of different ways. Which explanation do you find most satisfying?

Rhetoric

<https://www.americanrhetoric.com/>



- *'Never be ashamed of trying': Taylor Swift tells Class of 2022 in commencement speech | GMA*

How do you feel about this speech?

Does it move you?

Rhetoric

Rhetoric: discovering in each case all possible means of persuasion

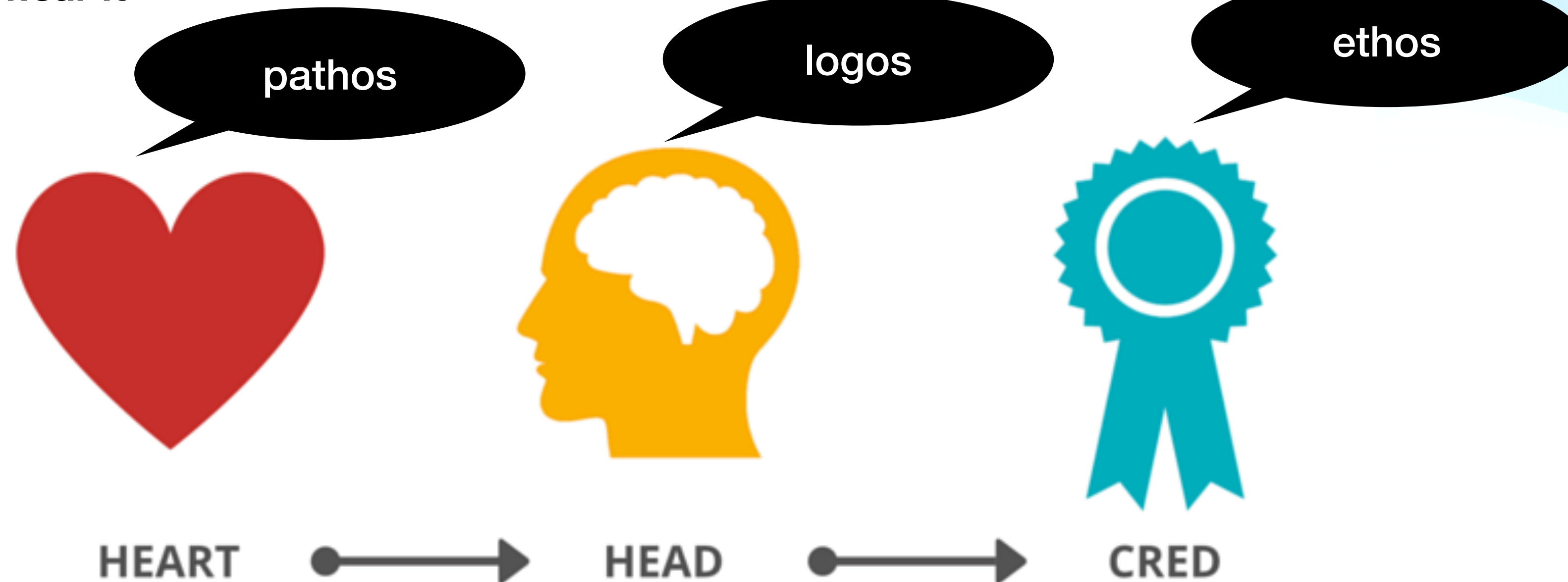
Dialectic	Rhetoric
One-on-one discussion	One person addressing many
Answer general philosophical questions	Address specific, practical ones
Claim certainty	Claim probability

Rhetoric Proof

the emotional proof, which comes from the feelings the speech draws out of those who hear it

the logical proof, which comes from the lines of argument in a speech

the ethical proof, the perceived credibility as it is revealed through the message



The type of Logos

Enthymeme (Deductive) vs. Example (Inductive)

- Enthymeme: a type of syllogism (reasoning) that leaves out an accepted premise.

Catholics have promoted the use of fair-minded words.

Notre Dame is a Catholic university.

We should use fair-minded words.

Major/General
Premise

Minor/Specific
Premise

Conclusion

The type of logos

Enthymeme (Deductive) vs. Example (Inductive)

- Examples are used to illustrate a premise or a conclusion of an enthymeme.
- *How would you add “examples” to the enthymeme example at the former page?*

The components of credibility

Perceived Intelligence

Virtuous Character

Goodwill

Five standards of rhetoric in speech

Invention

Hunt for arguments in the speech.

Arrangement

Use introduction to catch attention, and make clear the purpose of the speech; use the conclusion to remind the listeners what we've said.

Style

The use of metaphors.

Delivery

Audiences reject deliveries that seems planned or staged. So be natural.

Memory

Speaker never lose words.

Thank you!
See you next week!